

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 4, 2005

For More Information Contact

VDH 05-XX

Danielle Jones, Adolescent Sexual Health Programs Outreach Coordinator, (804) 864-7701

Charles Ford, PIO, (804) 864-7668

**OCTOBER RECOGNIZED AS “LET’S TALK MONTH” BY
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

(RICHMOND, Va.)—Parents have tremendous influence on their children’s decision making. The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) understands the importance of parents’ influence and proclaims October as “Let’s Talk Month” in Virginia.

“Let’s Talk Month” is recognized in communities across the country as an opportunity to promote communication between parents and their children, especially regarding relationships and sexuality.

Talking to a teenager about sex can be a daunting task for parents, especially if groundwork has not already been laid for open and honest communication. It is important for parents to start talking to their children about friendships and relationships early on. Parents can use TV, movies and music to start conversations and keep them going.

“Many parents are surprised by the research finding that youth want to have these conversations with parents,” said Gale E. Grant, director of Adolescent Sexual Health Programs.

There are many resources available to parents to help them start important conversations about friendship, relationships, expectations, goals and their own family’s values. VDH is providing parents with a free resource called Talk 2 Me, a toolkit for discussing sexuality and relationships with your kids.

The kit is designed for to help parents of 10 to 14 year olds talk with their kids about sexuality issues. The scenarios cover a variety of topics such as peer pressure, sexually transmitted diseases, postponing sexual involvement, sexual activity, abstaining, harassing and bullying behavior, dating and breaking curfew. Included in the kit are a CD with sample conversations, a parent brochure, a how-to guide, a resource guide and an interactive card game.

Parents can visit www.vatalk2me.org to request a copy of Talk 2 Me. Additional resources for parents, teens, educators, health care workers and faith community leaders are available at www.canwait.com, or by calling (877) CAN-WAIT.

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